

## Message Text

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FOR SONNENFELDT AND HARTMAN

FOL RPT ROME 20020 ACTION SECSTATE INFO FLORENCE MILAN NAPLES

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TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: ANDREOTTI'S US VISIT DOMINATES ITALIAN MEDIA

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI'S TWO-DAY WASHINGTON VISIT DOMINATED ITALIAN MEDIA ATTENTION. THE FRONT-PAGE TREATMENT OFTEN ACCOMPANIED BY PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE PRESIDENT AND ANDREOTTI OR SENATOR MONDALE WITH ANDREOTTI, HAS BEEN GENERALLY FAVORABLE. MOST STORIES STRESS ANDREOTTI'S SUCCESS IN OBTAINING SUPPORT IN PRINCIPLE FOR A US-DIRECTED INTERNATIONAL EFFORT TO SUSTAIN THE LIRA AGAINST ANTICIPATED SPECULATIVE PRESSURES IN COMING MONTHS. THE PRIME MINISTER'S EFFORTS TO CONVINCE BOTH US POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCLES OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO CONFRONT THE CURRENT CRISIS PROVIDED A SECOND THEME. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE CONSERVATIVE PRESS CONTINUES TO CRITICIZE ANDREOTTI'S RECENT PRESS INTERVIEWS WHICH ACKNOWLEDGED THE PCI'S HELPFUL AND MODERATE ROLE IN SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S EMERGENCY MEASURES. END SUMMARY.

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SUMMARY.

1. ANDREOTTI'S MEETINGS WITH THE PRESIDENT, SECRETARIES KISSINGER AND SIMON, AS WELL AS WITH THE IMF WERE REPORTED IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL. MOST PAPERS STRESSED THE ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES OF THE VISIT, NOTING THAT THE VISIT WAS IMPORTANT IN ESTABLISHING THE CRITERIA FOR FUTURE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE RATHER THAN IN SETTTLING SPECIFIC LOAN ARRANGEMENTS. WRITING IN CORRIERE DELLA SERA, UGO STILLE PROVIDED A DETAILED OUTLINE OF THE VARIOUS FORMS OF POSSIBLE FOREIGN LOAN ASSISTANCE UNDER THE HEADING: "WASHINGTON WILL SUPPORT THE LIRA AGAINST ANY SPECULATIVE MANEUVRES." THE MEETINGS WITH SENATOR MONDALE AND SECRETARY OF STATE-DESIGNATE VANCE WERE JUDGED OF CONSIDERABLE SIGNIFICANCE IN ASSURING THAT "THE AGREEMENTS REACHED WERE SUCH THAT THEY WOULD BE APPROVED BY THE FUTURE CARTER ADMINISTRATION."

2. MOST ACCOUNTS ALSO STRESSED THE POINT MADE BY TURIN'S LA STAMPA THAT "FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE, BUT ONLY IF AUSTERITY PROGRAMS ARE REALIZED AND EXTENDED TO THE ENTIRE ECONOMIC SPHERE." THE COMMENTATORS GENERALLY POINTED OUT THAT THE "COMMUNIST QUESTION" INEVITABLY CAME UP IN THE CONTEXT OF ANDREOTTI'S ASSURANCES THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD THE POLITICAL CAPACITY TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH THE ECONOMIC CRISIS. AS UGO STILLE REPORTED, ANDREOTTI'S STRATEGIC DESIGN WAS TO "CREATE POLITICAL CRICLES AND IN THE ECONOMIC WORLD A CLIMATE OF CONFIDENCE IN ITALY'S ABILITY TO OVERCOME ITS CURRENT CRISIS IN SUCH A WAY AS TO OBTAIN THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT IT NEEDS."

3. PCI COVERAGE WAS STRAIGHT-FORWARD, EMPHASIZING THE VISIT'S ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES AND THE PCI'S HELPFUL ROLE IN RESOLVING ITALY'S CRISIS. UNITA, FOR EXAMPLE, STRESSED THE FACT THAT ANDREOTTI'S PRESENTATION IN WASHINGTON WAS STRENGTHENED BY THE FACT THAT HE COULD DEMONSTRATE THAT "ALL ITALIAN POLITICAL FORCES, INCLUDING THE PCI AND THE UNIONS, ARE BEHAVING IN A RESPONSIBLE AND SERIOUS WAY." COMMENT: THIS LINE, OF COURSE, ALSO SERVES TO JUSTIFY THE CORRECTNESS OF THE PCI'S LINE TO ITS BASE SINCE THE PAPER GOES ON TO ASSERT THAT FAILURE TO ASSIST ITALY IN OVERCOMING THE CRISIS WOULD HAVE "CATASTROPHIC" REPERCUSSIONS. END COMMENT.

4. AVANTI (PSI) COMMENTS THAT ALTHOUGH THE TRIP MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN AT THE MOST OPPORTUNE MOMENT, IT WAS PREMATURE TO EXPRESS A JUDGMENT BEFORE THE VISIT'S END. THE SOCIALIST PAPER WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CRITICAL, HOWEVER, OF POLITICALLY ONEROUS FOREIGN ECONOMIC DEMANDS, PARTICULARLY THE IMF'S POLICY OF "SAVAGE DEFLATION."

5. ANDREOTTI'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IN RECENT FOREIGN PRESS INTERVIEWS (BUSINESS WEEK, LE MONDE, NY TIMES) OF THE PCI'S POLITICAL MODERATION CONTINUES TO TROUBLE THE CONSERVATIVE PRESS. LA NAZIONE RAN A CAUSTIC EDITORIAL CHARGING THAT ANDREOTTI HAS EMBARKED ON "A NEW AND DANGEROUS POLICY" OF CONVINCING THE US THAT PCI PARTICIPATION

IN GOVERNMENT IS NOT ONLY NECESSARY BUT HARMLESS AND HELPFUL.  
IL GIORNALE'S LUCENTINI ALSO CRITIZES ANDREOTTI FOR "FLIRTING WITH  
THE IDEA OF AN OPENING TO THE COMMUNISTS" IN HIS OFFICIAL  
DECLARATIONS.

6. COMMENT: IN VIEWS OF THE ATTENTION FOCUSED BY THE VISIT ON  
US ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PCI, ANDREOTTI'S PURPOSE IN PORTRAYING THE  
PCI IN FAVORABLE TERMS IN THE PRE-DEPARTURE PRESS INTERVIEWS IS  
PUZZLING. HE SEEMS TO BE ARGUING FOR GREATER US UNDERSTANDING OF  
THE NEED FOR THE PCI'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ITALIAN POLITICAL  
PROCESS ON THE PRAGMATIC GROUNDS THAT ITALY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS  
CAN ONLY BE DEALT WITH THE PCI'S BENEVOLENT ASSISTANCE. ANDREOTTI  
MAY HAVE ALSO FELT COMPELLED PUBLICLY TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PCI'S  
HELPFUL ROLE, PARTICULARLY FOR THE US AUDIENCE, AS A MEANS OF DOING  
SOMETHING POLITICALLY USEFUL FOR THE PCI WHICH DOES NOT COST HIM  
MUCH IN REAL TERMS. IN ANY EVENT, HIS STATEMENTS FUEL THE SUSPICIONS  
OF MANY IN HIS PARTY (BY NO MEANS LIMITED TO THE CENTER-RIGHT)  
THAT ANDREOTTI MAY BE INCLINED TO EFFECT COMPROMISES WITH THE PCI.  
BEAUDRY  
UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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